
FNS Programs and Farmers Markets

Low-income consumers, small farmers, and communities all benefit from the availability of farmers markets. They are an enjoyable way for consumers to buy fresh, nutritious produce, for small farmers to have new outlets for their fruits and vegetables, and for communities to add to their economic base.

Community Involvement

- ☐ Are farmers markets available in your community?

Farmers markets have become a substantial sales outlet for agricultural producers nationwide. Farmers markets can help support local agriculture by giving farmers an outlet to sell directly to consumers. They also can give schools the opportunity to purchase fresh local produce for their school meals. And they promote expansion and diversification of family farms by providing an outlet for fresh fruits and vegetables. Farmers markets can also help promote nutrition education, wholesome eating habits, and better food preparation. Finally, farmers markets bring customers into the community, boosting the local economy.

Food Stamp Program

- ☐ Are farmers markets in your community authorized as food stamp retailers?

Whether a State issues food coupons or electronic benefits, the Food Stamp Program offers low-income consumers an opportunity to buy a wide range of fresh produce that otherwise would be unavailable to them.

WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program

- ☐ Does your State participate in the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program?

The WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program provides fresh, nutritious produce to women, infants, and children who are at risk for poor nutrition. The Farmers Market Nutrition Program gives WIC an opportunity to feature fresh fruits and vegetables in nutrition education activities to encourage participants to eat more of these wholesome foods.



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WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Find out if there are farmers markets in your area. Support their efforts with your patronage.
- Contact your local FNS Field Office to find out how farmers markets or individual farmers who sell produce through farmers markets can be authorized to accept food stamps.
- Work with farmers markets and individuals to ensure acceptance of electronic benefits at the markets.
- Find ways that the community can help start a Farmers Market Nutrition Program.
- Search for alternate funding to expand the Farmers Market Nutrition Program.